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period") prefer rather to lead than to follow the fashion, by producing compositions formed upon the models which have been bequeathed to us by those writers who have elevated the art to its present position. Here is a "Sketch," by a clever musician, of whom we have before made favourable mention, commendable alike for intention in the design, and for success in the execution. It commences with a brief Introduction, which leads to a Minuet, in which a bold and well marked subject is treated with much skill and effect; the left hand claiming its place in the movement as something more than a mere attendant upon the right. A good point is where, after the passage of thirds, a portion of the subject is alternated between the two hands. The Trio, in the subdominant, begins with a placid theme, accompanied by *staccato* chords in the right hand. A striking change of key afterwards occurs; and some rather wide extensions are written, which must be practised with care, even by those accustomed to the unmerciful stretches demanded by many of the modern "Fantasia" composers. This piece is by no means easy to play; but Mr. Thorne has proved that he does not write for those who only purchase music cut to the received pattern; and we therefore recommend his work to the few who can appreciate it.

Allegro Scherzando. For the Pianoforte. Composed by J. H. Deane.

Mr. Deane writes well for his instrument; but the trifling nature of his "Allegro Scherzando" does not warrant his extending the piece to eighteen pages. There is actually no cessation of the triplets from beginning to end; and the almost eternal four-quaver accompaniment in the left hand becomes excessively tiresome. The passages lie pleasantly under the hand, however; the harmonies are natural, and the changes of key generally well managed. The composition has almost the effect of a piece of extempore playing, where continuity is more thought of than contrast and proportion.

Home is Home, however lowly. Ballad. Written by Alaric A. Watts. Composed by R. Minton Taylor.

A GRACEFUL and melodious ballad, somewhat over harmonised, however, and, consequently, scarcely as attractive as it might have been had the composer been less ambitious. How difficult it is to be simple! Inexperienced students, for instance, cram as many notes into a score as they can get in, to make the harmony rich; and an experienced master cuts half of them out, as a gardener cuts down trees—to strengthen those that remain.

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Messe Solennelle, a quatre voix, Soli et Chœurs. Composée et Dédinée à Madame la Comtesse Pillet-Will, par G. Rossini.

It may be supposed that Mozart wrote his *Requiem*, Haydn his two great Masses in D minor and B flat, and Beethoven his two only Masses, each with the highest aim of an artist, that of producing the best which was possible to him, his own satisfaction being the sole standard to which he referred for judgment. The same may be believed of Rossini with regard to his *Stabat Mater*, and to the present work, which is now interesting large classes of music-lovers in all parts of the world. Neither was written in haste, as was the case with all his Italian operas; neither was addressed, as all of them were, to popular effect; neither was designed to elicit public applause, either by its own superficial prettiness, or by its accommodation to the peculiarities of some favourite singer; and neither was composed with a view to pecuniary profit, the last having been reserved until the author could not enjoy the fruit of his labour in the payment of the publisher, any more than in the admiration of the world. Here is fair ground for believing that the sacred compositions of Rossini, like the German masterpieces that have been named, were written to please the author, whose source of pleasure, whose measure of excellence, nay, in some sort,

whose personal character, may be traced in works produced under the circumstances of these. Whatever may be said of the subjective and objective in art, every work must, to some extent, reveal the personality and the individuality of the artist, and be an exposition or confession of how he thinks and feels differently from other men; and all the more so when, as with the *Stabat* and the Mass of Rossini, the work is wrought at leisure and with unforced inclination. To ignore, then, all the current stories of the habits of this fortunate musician during his forty years of retirement, and to interpret the nature of Rossini by the expression of it set forth in these voluntary confessions, one may fancy him to have been an applause-seeking voluptuary, who retained to the last the sensual love of all the sweetness of his native south, but who coveted esteem for erudition which he did not possess, which would have been irksome to him to acquire, and which, as much in itself as in its results, was uncongenial to his taste and to his feeling. There have long been perceived, in the *Stabat*, the characteristics which invite this interpretation: the always prevalent Italian style of melody, not frittered away in frivolous flourishes as in many of the most serious situations of the author's operas, but true Italian still, as purified by Bellini of its ornamental redundancy, and as dignified by Donizetti, and still more by Verdi, with masculine vigour; the tendency to chromatic harmony of that character which is picked out upon a key-board by any one who fancies himself endowed with a natural gift of preluding, the character in which frequently two notes are retained, while two others proceed by a semitone, the one up and the other down; the inclination to violent change of key, often enharmonic, at the cost of simpler and, it must be owned, more natural modulation; the employment of the extreme of orchestral resources on all occasions, whether appropriate or otherwise to the expressional requirements of the text; and, most conspicuously, the pretence of counterbalancing these extravagances by the assumption of scholarship, as exemplified in the final chorus of the *Stabat*, which more signally displays the author's want of contrapuntal power than any abstinence from fugal attempt would ever have led one to suspect in him. What is known of the *Stabat* may be looked for in the Mass. The latter was, even more than the former, a work of love, since, so far as we hear, it was wholly self-imposed; there was not the request of a high ecclesiastical dignity to exact it; and the characteristics of the *Stabat* are throughout more lovingly leant upon in the later production.

Here, then, we have a second sacred composition, to speak of the text, for the theatre and the concert-room.—a second secular composition, to speak of the music, for the Roman Church,—the work of the many years' most popular composer in Europe, who died to art in 1828, who died to the world in 1868, and who occupied the long period he passed in the purgatory of private life, with the tardy production of two large contributions to a class of music in which he had previously had no practice, for the good of his reputation, let us hope, and the welfare of his soul. Whoever likes the *Stabat Mater* of Rossini will love his Mass. Singers especially will delight in it, for, generally, it evinces strongly the capability in which his country excels, and in which Rossini was excellent among his countrymen,—the capability of writing for the voice so as to produce the best effects by the easiest means, and to make the act of singing his music a real pleasure to the vocalist. Among audiences, they who make the boarding-school distinction between singing and music, loving sound for its physical beauty rather than for its intellectual influence,—for its effect upon the senses more than for its embodiment of sense, will be enraptured with this composition, which is from end to end a course of vocalisation—pure singing for the sake of vocal display; devoid entirely of the encumbrance of declamation and expression; interrupted only with such demonstrations of supposed learning as will afford convenient moments of repose to the hearers, who may talk during which of the exquisite performance of the last solo